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EAST EUROPE BRANCH NOTES

6 February 1974

HUNGARY

On Force Reductions

The Warsaw Pact countries remain determined not to include Hungary in the zone of European force reductions unless NATO includes Italy, according to a Hungarian foreign ministry official. Reviewing other aspects of force reductions, the Hungarian repeated the current stand line: national force cuts (especially in West Germany) are as important as reductions in stationed forces; NATO air and nuclear forces must be included; there is no need for on-site inspection.

25X1 The Hungarian rejected as "ridiculous" the rumors that Moscow is shipping additional weapons to Hungary for possible repositioning of troops from the Central European zone. 25X1  
The Embassy says that the rumors of increased Soviet presence in Hungary are being fed largely by the Romanians. [REDACTED]

On CSCE

The same official says that the most important Communist goal at CSCE is to insure the "inviolability of frontiers." With an eye towards West Germany, the Hungarian said that any language allowing for changes by "peaceful methods" would be unacceptable. This view is erroneous. The Romanians are also keenly interested in "peaceful changes" of borders.

25X1 The spokesman acknowledged that the Communist side had reacted too negatively to "freer movement", and claimed that an "effort is being made" to show a more positive attitude. The official was vague on specifics, but mentioned the possibility of live television debates, steps to facilitate tourism, and increases in the exchange of "objective and non-inflammatory" information. The Hungarian claimed that Budapest was more prepared (than the GDR and USSR) for increased cultural and information exchanges, but added that the "convoy" can travel only as fast as its "slowest components." 25X1

25X1 State Dept. review completed

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### On East Germans

The Embassy reports that the recent visit of East German Premier Sindermann appeared to be hastily prepared and speculates that Pankow may have wanted to counteract the West German sojourn of the Hungarian Foreign Trade Minister. Several diplomatic observers in Budapest were struck by the perfunctory nature of the visit. The Embassy concludes that while the GDR is Hungary's second most important trading partner, there still is little warmth in this business relationship.

Both Pankow and Budapest would have their own reasons for wanting to stress bilateral ties while Hungarian-West German relations are on the upswing. The East Germans want to keep abreast of developments, and the Hungarians want to give the appearance of coordinating moves towards the West with their allies. On balance, however, the Hungarians probably were more of a moving force for the Sindermann visit, fearing the East Germans could gain the tactical advantage by acting as an aggrieved party in this triangle.

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### YUGOSLAVIA

#### Apparent Minic Heart Attack Postpones Swedish Visit

According to Swedish diplomats in Belgrade, Foreign Secretary Minic suffered a heart attack that forced his early return from India and a postponement of the Swedish Foreign Minister's visit to Yugoslavia that was slated to begin on February 8. Minic will reportedly be hospitalized for another 10-14 days and then will rest at home for two more weeks. The Foreign Secretariat answered US embassy queries by noting that Minic's condition was not serious.

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### POLAND

#### Church, State, and Rome: The Obtuse Triangle

Archbishop Casaroli, the Vatican's de facto foreign minister, arrived in Warsaw on February 4 for talks aimed at forging formal diplomatic ties. Thus far, Casaroli and his Polish interlocutors have exchanged public compliments, but otherwise have dodged reporters' questions on the prospects for progress in relations, probably with good reason. The Vatican is committed to clearing any

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agreement with the Polish Church, and the Church is currently at war with the state. Cardinal Wyszynski, for example, has charged that the government's pending education reform bill will effectively deny Polish youth the right to a religious education. Moreover, the case of Piotr Zabielski, the priest arrested for holding Mass in his own home, continues to stir hard feelings. By law, the state appears to have been within its rights in apprehending the priest. His subsequent commitment to a mental hospital has, however, left authorities open to the charge of emulating Soviet intimidation tactics.

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### The Great Escape

A late January pleasure cruise of the Stefan Batory has turned into a fiasco for the Gierek regime. At last count, 81 of the 325 passengers--mostly from the "favored" working class--had defected during stops at Western ports--64 in Hamburg, 12 in Copenhagen, and 5 in Oslo. While it is possible that some simply failed to note the correct sailing time, it seems obvious that most deliberately jumped ship. A Hamburg city official, in a Solomon-like decision, has announced that none of the refugees has a valid reason for political asylum, and yet none will be sent back. Thus far, Warsaw is covering its embarrassment with a thick blanket of silence. A Polish diplomat in Bonn doubts that his government will push the issue even in private, and a German foreign office specialist has expressed the view that the incident will have no impact on current West German-Polish talks.

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### CZECHOSLOVAKIA

#### The West Makes Economic Waves

A Prague radio broadcast admits that "the crisis of the capitalist currency system and its effects on international relations are unpleasant for our economy too." It points out that the rise in prices in the West makes travel more expensive for Czechoslovak citizens. A much heavier burden, says the broadcast, is the sharp increase in the price of raw materials and of imported engineering equipment. To meet these difficulties, Czechoslovakia must increase the price of its exports to the West and make the best use of its expensive imported raw materials and machinery.

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## BULGARIA

### Election Statistics

Bulgarians elected about 52,000 representatives to provincial, city and village Peoples' Councils in mid-January nationwide elections. Of these, 51% are members of the Communist party, 18% are from the Nation Agricultural Union, 16% from the Dimitrov Communist Youth Union (Komsomol) and 15% are without party affiliation. The latter group increased from 9% since the last local elections in 1971. The percentage of women candidates also rose from 26% in 1971 to 36% this year.

Although a new 1973 electoral law in theory permits multiple candidates to stand for these offices, this approach was not followed during the elections. In some small rural districts or enterprises, however, multiple choice was presumably allowed, especially among the non-Party contingent.

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